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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER

WRIGHT, ANDREW D

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3617

DATE MAILED: 07/02/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/708,309

Applicant(s)

GILMER, PATTI C.

Examiner

Andrew Wright

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 June 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2 and 4-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 15 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2 and 4-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☒ The proposed drawing correction filed on 11 June 2002 is: a) ☒ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

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DETAILED ACTION

1. The indicated allowability of claim 14 is withdrawn in view of a new rejection. The finality of the previous Office Action is withdrawn in light of the new rejection. The amendment submitted 6/11/02 will be entered as a matter of right. Accordingly, the claims addressed in this Office Action are those pending after entry of the 6/11/02 amendment. New rejections based on the art of record follow. This Office Action is non-final.

Drawings

2. The corrected or substitute drawings were received on 6/11/02. These drawings are acceptable.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 2, 4, 6, and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

5. Claims 2, 4, and 6 contain language that is redundant to the independent claimed from which they respectively depend. As such, claims 2, 4, and 6 do not further limit the respective parent claims.

6. Claim 8 recites the limitation "said plurality of raised portions" in line 1. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 1, 2, 4-6, and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Darcy (US 5,823,838) in view of Grunstein et al. (US 6,260,199) and Khanamirian (US 6,235,661). Regarding claim 1, Darcy discloses, in line 55 of column 6 through line 3 of column 7, in lines 45-65 of column 16, and in figures 20 - 22, a flotation suit that comprises a form-fitting torso covering with pockets that receive and retain buoyant material. Darcy discloses that the buoyant material may be in the form of a unitary element comprising a base sheet of buoyant material with integrally attached raised portions. It can be seen from figure 20 that the raised portions are substantially thicker than the base sheet. Darcy teaches that the element is placed in the pocket of the torso garment. Darcy shows in figures 21 and 22 that the plurality of raised portions includes an upper torso portion and a lower torso portion. Darcy does not disclose that the form fitting torso covering has a right arm covering, a left arm covering, a right leg covering, and a left leg covering. Grunstein discloses a bodysuit with added flotation, similar to that of Darcy. Grunstein, however, discloses a form fitting torso covering that is more than just a vest. Grunstein discloses a form fitting torso covering that also has a right arm covering, a left arm covering, a right leg covering, and a left leg covering. Reasons for this are to provide tight fit when the user is in the water, so that the suit

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does not slide around on the user. Another reason for adding the extra covering is for thermal protection of the wearer. Therefore it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of Darcy by adding a right arm covering, a left arm covering, a right leg covering, and a left leg covering as taught by Grunstein.

9. Further regarding claim 1, Darcy does not disclose a fabric sheet of the pocket being laminated to the flotation element. Khanamirian discloses in figures 2 the practice of laminating pocket fabric to the enclosed flotation element. Khanamirian teaches that the lamination produces an ergonomically contoured design which provides the wearer superior fit, form, function, protection, and is aesthetically pleasing. Therefore it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of Darcy by using the lamination taught by Khanamirian.

10. The elements of claims 2 and 4-6 are included in claim 1.

11. Regarding claim 13, Darcy in view of Grunstein does not disclose the recited method steps. The method steps recited in claim 13, however, are inherent in the manufacture and use of the modified suit of Darcy. Therefore it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to devise the claimed method steps based upon manufacture and usage of the modified suit of Darcy. The motivation would be to manufacture and use the suit.

12. Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Darcy (US 5,823,838) in view of Khanamirian (US 6,235,661). Darcy discloses, in line 55 of column 6 through line 3 of column 7, in lines 45-65 of column 16, and in figures 20 - 22,

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a flotation suit that comprises a form-fitting torso covering with pockets that receive and retain buoyant material. Darcy discloses that the buoyant material may be in the form of a unitary element comprising a base sheet of buoyant material with integrally attached raised portions. It can be seen from figure 20 that the raised portions are substantially thicker than the base sheet. Darcy teaches that the element is placed in the pocket of the torso garment. Darcy shows in figures 21 and 22 that the plurality of raised portions includes an upper torso portion and a lower torso portion. Darcy does not disclose a fabric sheet of the pocket being laminated to the flotation element. Khanamirian discloses in figures 2 the practice of laminating pocket fabric to the enclosed flotation element. Khanamirian teaches that the lamination produces an ergonomically contoured design which provides the wearer superior fit, form, function, protection, and is aesthetically pleasing. Therefore it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of Darcy by using the lamination taught by Khanamirian.

13. Claims 7-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Darcy (US 5,823,838) in view of Grunstein et al. (US 6,260,199). Regarding claim 1, Darcy discloses, in line 55 of column 6 through line 3 of column 7, in lines 45-65 of column 16, and in figures 20 - 22, a flotation suit that comprises a form-fitting torso covering with pockets that receive and retain buoyant material. Darcy discloses that the buoyant material may be in the form of a unitary element comprising a base sheet of buoyant material with integrally attached raised portions. It can be seen from figure 20 that the raised portions are substantially thicker than the base sheet. Darcy teaches that

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the element is placed in the pocket of the torso garment. Darcy shows in figures 21 and 22 that the plurality of raised portions includes an upper torso portion and a lower torso portion. The two front pads and the one back pad of Darcy combine to constitute a layer that is distributed substantially throughout. The raised portions of Darcy constitute the plurality of enhanced buoyancy regions. Darcy does not disclose that the form fitting torso covering has a right arm covering, a left arm covering, a right leg covering, and a left leg covering. Grunstein discloses a bodysuit with added flotation, similar to that of Darcy. Grunstein, however, discloses a form fitting torso covering that is more than just a vest. Grunstein discloses a form fitting torso covering that also has a right arm covering, a left arm covering, a right leg covering, and a left leg covering. Reasons for this are to provide tight fit when the user is in the water, so that the suit does not slide around on the user. Another reason for adding the extra covering is for thermal protection of the wearer. Therefore it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of Darcy by adding a right arm covering, a left arm covering, a right leg covering, and a left leg covering as taught by Grunstein.

14. Regarding claim 8, Darcy shows in figures 21 and 22 that the plurality of raised portions includes an upper torso portion and a lower torso portion.

15. Regarding claim 9, Darcy discloses a fastenable torso opening.

16. Regarding claim 10, Darcy discloses that the torso opening is a fastenable chest opening.

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17. Regarding claim 11, Darcy does not disclose a fastenable back opening.

Grunstein discloses a flotation swimsuit that comprises a torso garment with a pocket that retains a unitary flotation element, the element comprising portions of differing thickness. Grunstein's swimsuit has a zippered back opening. Grunstein teaches that the swimsuit is designed for use with a child, and that the back opening facilitates dressing the child. Therefore it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of Darcy by using a zippered back opening as taught by Grunstein. The motivation would be to accommodate a child.

18. Regarding claim 12, Darcy discloses that the fastenable torso opening includes a zipper.

Allowable Subject Matter

19. Claim 15 is allowed.

Conclusion

20. Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to examiner Andrew D. Wright at telephone number (703) 308-6841. The examiner can normally be reached Monday-Friday from 9:00 - 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, S. Joe Morano, can be reached at (703) 308-0230. The fax number for official communications is 703-872-9326 for before final proceedings and 703-872-9327 for after final proceedings. The fax number for the examiner for unofficial communications is 703-746-3548.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist at (703) 308-1113.

Andrew D. Wright
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 3617



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